

California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Santa Ana Region
April 19, 2001

ITEM: 14

SUBJECT: Orange County Coastkeeper Kelp Reforestation Project

DISCUSSION:

In May 2000, the Orange County Coastkeeper's Kelp Reforestation Project was the recipient of a \$40,000 contribution from Pelican Hills Golf Club, Inc., the operator of the two golf courses in the Newport Coast development of Newport Beach. Pelican Hills Golf Club, Inc., made this contribution as a Supplemental Environmental Project, in partial settlement of an administrative civil liability complaint issued by the Regional Board's Executive Officer. The complaint cited unpermitted discharges of recycled water into the Pacific Ocean at Crystal Cove State Beach. The SWRCB had previously designated this an "Area of Special Biological Significance" (ASBS), where waste discharges are prohibited. The complaint imposed a total liability of \$148,000.

The Coastkeeper requested this contribution to support a year-long project effort to help reestablish kelp beds off Crystal Cove State Beach and nearby ASBS's. The project proposed would incorporate a strong public education element, working through local schools to foster an appreciation of the ecological value of marine environments in general, and kelp forests in particular. School science lab projects would nurture kelp "starts," and student volunteer divers would place the fledgling kelp colonies on the ocean floor in areas previously dominated by kelp communities. Student volunteer divers would also monitor the growth of the colonies they had placed.

The Coastkeeper's Garry Brown will provide the Board with an update of this project.